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Baltimore District

10 Things I Wish I'd Known When I was An Intern

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Contracting Executive

US Army Missile Defense Command

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#1 – You're the Career Manager

- The Person most responsible for managing your career is…You!
- You are in charge of ensuring you get:
  - The right training and
  - The proper experience
- Intern coordinators are there to help BUT…
- The bottom line responsibility is YOURS.

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#2 – What's really important?

- **Decide what's important to you!**
  - **Maximizing advancement (Grade)**
  - **Location, location, location**
  - **Type of work:**
    - **Technical**
    - **Management**
    - **Organizational leadership**
  - **Family/schools**
- **Adjust your career goals accordingly**
- **If you are not Mobile – opportunities for senior grades may be limited (but that may be Ok with you!)**

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#3 – Credentials

- **Credentials set you apart from your competition:**
  - **Computer skills; e.g., Microsoft Office, P2, CEFMS**
  - **Bachelors/Masters degree**
  - **Professional certifications/licenses**
  - **Details/Cross-training**
  - **Publications/Public speaking**
  - **Professional Associations**
  - **Leadership assignments**
  - **Task forces/regional assignments**
  - **Awards**
- **Get them!**

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#4 – Work two promotion ahead

- Everyday you come to work, you are working on your next promotion – that's NOT enough!
- Start thinking about your Second level promotion today.
- What will you need to be competitive:
  - Technical skills
  - Computer skills
  - Management skills
  - Leadership skills
- Start obtaining them NOW!

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#5 – Networking is Good, Volunteering is Better!

- Do you know your Senior leaders & SES's?
- More importantly – do they know You?
- The dirtier the job - the better it is to volunteer:
  - Project closeouts
  - End of year crunch
  - Field/task force details
  - Disaster relief missions
  - OCONUS deployments
- You will be recognized as a dedicated team player.

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#6 – Getting ahead

- **Study after study have concluded that getting ahead is a function of 3 things:**
  - **Opportunity**
  - **Technical skill**
  - **Exposure**
- **Of these, the most important is EXPOSURE! (60%)**
- **Does your boss's boss know you?**
- **P.S.: Remember "Volunteering"!**
- **P.S.S.: Technical skill is the least important of the 3 listed (about 5-10%).**
- **Why?? – Most of your serious competition is just as good technically as you are!**

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#7 – Are your Records up to Date?

- Keep you records up to date, especially:
  - IDPs
  - Personnel files
  - Resumes
- Keep originals in your desk.
- Paper copies at home.
- With a third set on a disk or CD somewhere else.

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#8 – Experience Checklist

- **Create an experience checklist of what you've done:**
  - **By type of work:**
    - **Technical**
    - **Management**
    - **Diversity/complexity**
  - **By dollar value**
  - **By program/customer**
  - **By geographic location**
- **Then determine what you haven't done, and Go Get It!**

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#9 – Be Aware

- **You are being judged and evaluated every day on:**
  - **Attitude**
  - **Dependability**
  - **Being a team player**
  - **Cooperativeness**
  - **Willingness to volunteer**
  - **Flexibility**
  - **Ability to adapt**
  - **Innovation**
- **Office politics are a fact of life – be prepared to deal with it.**

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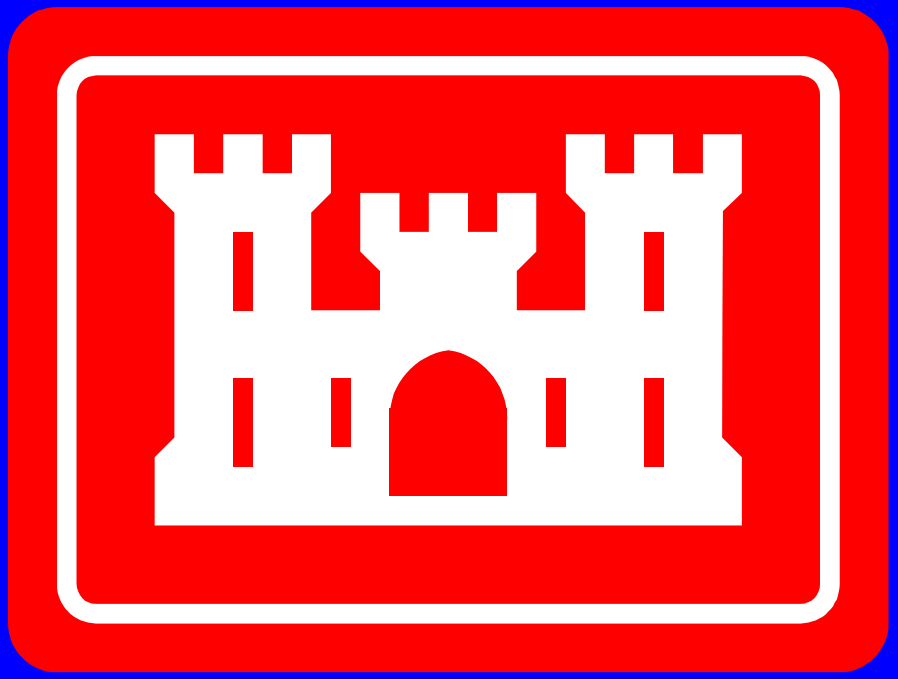
#10 – Be a Professional

- **To be treated like a professional…**
  - **Act like one (Take your job seriously)**
  - **Dress like one**
  - **Treat others as professionals**
  - **Be helpful whenever you can**
  - **Avoid personality conflicts if possible**
- **Remember that with every rotation, every new job and every promotion… You will have to prove yourself all over again!**



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